

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

The airing of this false, anger-based "mockumentary" against Kerry is a clear attempt to discredit him and swing the election in favor of George Bush. I thought this type of corporate influence was illegal? What about equal time laws for candidates? Shouldn't Sinclair be required to air a comparable program of equal length and themes about George Bush, during the same peak prime time hours? Sinclair is saying this is a legitimate news story because they are inviting John Kerry to speak about it afterwards as a guest. That's beyond ridiculous at this stage of the game, and Sinclair should be ashamed of themselves.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.